



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 7, 2022

Debra Shore, Regional Administrator
US EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Regional Administrator Shore:

We write to you today on behalf of your Region 5 employees.

As you know, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 704, who represents the scientists, lawyers, and engineers at Region 5, came under unprecedented attack during the Trump Administration. The union resisted from within, and worked with NGOs, environmentalists, and our Congressional delegations in Region 5 states to keep the pressure on from the outside.

Trump's EPA attempted to squash Local 704's resistance by imposing union-busting executive orders through a management directive on the Region's 1,000 bargaining unit employees. The Trump management directive replaced the collectively bargained contract and evicted the union from the Chicago, IL office that the contract guaranteed them, an office the union held for the last 20 years.

After Trump's EPA evicted the union from its office at the 77 W. Jackson Building, the agency turned over its lease of the original 4th floor union office over to the Government Services Administration (GSA), the owner of the building. EPA did not reinstate the lease on behalf of the union and the issue proceeded to arbitration, which the union won on April 4th.

It is our understanding that EPA management has confirmed in writing that it will not forgo any appeal of the arbitration decision to Trump's Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA). As you know, the FLRA still has a Trump majority, because the Senate's appointments calendar has not proceeded swiftly.

The FLRA is one of the keys to solving federal workplace disputes and is an essential component to the smooth functioning of the federal government. When working at full capacity, the FLRA is fair in labor-management disputes and adjudicates matters efficiently.

Under Trump however, FLRA decisions became politically motivated, even malicious. Trump's FLRA actually overstepped its bounds to eradicate federal employee collective bargaining rights. Trump's FLRA overturned decisions that arbitrators decided for the union over 90% of the time, showing little ability to be impartial upon appeal. By reserving the ability to appeal the arbitrator's office space decision to Trump's FLRA, whether intentionally or not, EPA management stands to benefit from the

very anti-labor ideology both President Biden and the union worked so hard to overturn. We are asking you to consider confirming that EPA will not benefit from Trump's anti-labor appointees by appealing the arbitrator's decision.

We want to see Region 5 restored to its role as the nation's strongest force for environmental protection. We believe EPA should use all powers in its arsenal, including the power of management and labor working together, to solve the most pressing of environmental problems.

Your efforts in turning around EPA Region 5 are deeply appreciated by us and our constituents. We know that every day we will see the difference in environmental protection throughout the Great Lakes. We thank you for your devotion to keeping our air clean and our water safe. We trust that you will act to fix this disagreement between the union and EPA so that everyone can focus on the mission to safeguard our environment and public health. Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this matter, consistent with applicable agency guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rashida Tlaib". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Haley Stevens
Member of Congress

Andre Carson
Member of Congress

Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

Marie Newman
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Betty McCollum
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman McCollum:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

On April 4, 2022, the arbitrator issued its decision to AFGE Local 704 and EPA Region 5, which essentially directed the parties to provide the 15th floor space that EPA had previously offered the union during negotiations. Region 5 is now working to implement the arbitrator's decision. Also, EPA is currently in discussions with AFGE Local 704 regarding several union requests to modify the arbitrator's decision.

We look forward to resolving this matter with AFGE Local 704 and continuing to work with AFGE Local 704 to improve our labor management relationship.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Denise Fortin or Ronna Beckmann, the Region 5 Congressional Liaisons, at (312) 886-3000.

Sincerely,

**DEBRA
SHORE**

 Digitally signed by
DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
14:18:56 -05'00'

Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Debbie Dingell
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Dingell:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Sincerely,

**DEBRA
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DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Haley Stevens
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Stevens:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
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CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Ilhan Omar
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Omar:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Sincerely,

**DEBRA
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DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Andy Levin
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Levin:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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DEBRA SHORE
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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Marie Newman
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Newman:


Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Sincerely,
**DEBRA
SHORE**

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DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Bobby Rush
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rush:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Sincerely,

**DEBRA
SHORE**

 Digitally signed by
DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
14:20:06 -05'00'

Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable Rashida Tlaib
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Tlaib:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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Sincerely,

**DEBRA
SHORE**

 Digitally signed by DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15 14:25:44 -05'00'

Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

The Honorable André Carson
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Carson:

Thank you for your April 7, 2022 letter concerning AFGE Local 704 office space in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 Chicago office.

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**DEBRA
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Digitally signed by
DEBRA SHORE
Date: 2022.04.15
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Debra Shore
Regional Administrator
& Great Lakes National Program Manager
US EPA Region 5